

Vocal crowd in Bend gives Walden an earful

By AMANDA PEACHER
Oregon Public Broadcasting

More than 2,000 people turned out for an energetic, and sometimes hostile, town hall meeting hosted by Congressman Greg Walden in Bend Thursday evening.



Walden

Oregon's only Republican congressman fielded questions on everything from health care to background checks for gun buyers, to his alignment with President Trump. Walden scheduled the meeting in Bend after getting heat for not hosting a town hall in the largest city in his district since 2013.

Bend is a blue island of Democratic majority in a sea of Walden's mostly red district, and the largely left-leaning crowd quickly erupted with boos, chants, hisses or cheers at Walden's responses to statements from constituents.

At times, people who stood up to ask questions barely uttered a word or two — such as “climate change” or “public lands” — before being cut off by cheering

and stomping or boos. Walden was frequently interrupted by shouting. His town halls earlier this week in the Columbia River Gorge were similarly crowded.

Walden responded calmly, asking the audience to be respectful and let speakers get their questions out.

“You're starting to sound like Congress” Walden said, repeating a line he had used earlier in the week during a similarly unruly moment.

Health care was a prominent major topic for many.

“Why do you want to do away with the Affordable Care Act?” asked one young woman.

Walden was a key author of the Republican bill written to replace Obamacare. The bill was pulled in Congress earlier this year when it was obvious Republicans did not have enough votes for it to pass.

Walden pointed out all of the elements of the ACA that he supported retaining, such as protections for people with pre-existing conditions and allowing young people to remain on their

parent's plan until the age of 26. But Walden said the health care system under Obama had major problems.

“I want to fix it, so it will work,” he said.

One supporter thanked Walden for his position in support of immigration reform.

“I believe illegals need to leave this country,” said a man, who was in a wheelchair and identified as a veteran.

The crowd responded with eruptive applause when Bend resident Aimee Metcalf asked Walden to distance himself from Trump and his policies.

“What is happening with our president is not normal,” she said, referring to Trump's relationship with Russia. “You know it.”

Walden suggested there are many places where he disagrees with the president. When asked why the congressman does not press Trump to release his tax information, he said “Every one of us has a right to protect our tax returns.”

“Boo!” the crowd shouted, with many holding up red signs that said “DISAGREE.” A handful of people clapped, and one supporter held a sign that said

“Thank You Walden.”

The environment and public lands also loomed large in the talk.

“Why have you not stood up to the Trump administration's anti-environment actions?” asked one man.

“E-P-A! E-P-A!” the crowd began chanting.

One woman asked if the congressman saw any end to the partisanship in Washington.

“What you don't see is how much we do work together,” Walden said. “Some things we disagree on, but there's a lot that we work together on in Congress.”

Walden's responses were at times technical and specific, referring to his voting record on specific legislation.

His staff displayed slides on a 20-foot screen at the front of the high school gym with bullet points about health care, veterans affairs or other issues as they came up.

The meeting was slated to last an hour but it went on for two. Many in the crowd thanked Walden for coming to Bend and responding to such an energetic crowd.

Walden skeptical of Freedom Caucus health care idea

Associated Press

A House committee chairman who's a leading author of the mired Republican health care bill says he's skeptical about proposals the Trump administration and conservative lawmakers have discussed aimed at breathing life into the legislation.

The White House and leaders of the conservative House Freedom Caucus have discussed letting states seek federal waivers to insurance requirements imposed by President Barack Obama's health care law. These have included waiving that statute's ban against insurers charging seriously ill customers higher premiums than healthy people.

Oregon Republican congressman Greg Walden says in an interview with The Associated Press that he'd have to be convinced the suggested changes won't take coverage away from people.

Conservatives say eliminating the requirement would help keep premiums lower.

Walden chairs the House Energy and Commerce panel.

Man charged with allegedly killing, wasting a dozen elk

By STEVE TOOL
EO Media Group

A Wallowa County man is suspected of poaching and wasting at least a dozen elk on his property — and perhaps 13 more found dead on adjoining land.

Larry Harshfield, 69, was arrested April 8 and charged with 12 counts of taking elk out of season and 12 counts of wasting elk.

The charges stem from a Feb. 11 search of the Harshfield Ranch, located in the city of Wallowa. During the search, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife troopers located 25 dead elk, 12 of which were located on Harshfield's property and 13 others were nearby.

The elk carcasses appeared not to have had any attempt to salvage meat from them, according

to ODFW.

Harshfield was charged with poaching the 12 elk on his property and was lodged at the Wallowa County Jail. Additional charges for the 13 dead elk on the adjoining property will be referred to the Wallowa County District Attorney for consideration.

Mike Hansen, assistant district wildlife biologist for ODFW, said that the department can issue a kill permit or a hazing permit for elk that cause consistent damage to a farmer's crops. Hansen said Harshfield had contacted ODFW about the permits. The kill permit requires the farmer to field dress and skin the animal and take it to a meat processing facility.

“He did not want to do that,” Hansen said. “We gave him a hazing permit.”

A hazing permit does not allow for any killing of elk.

Oregon wetland exemption moves forward

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

SALEM — While bringing a hay exporter one step closer to rebuilding his burned-down barns, Oregon lawmakers are preparing for a broader discussion about wetland regulations.

After fire destroyed his two barns last year, state regulators informed hay exporter Jesse Bounds that rebuilding the structures violated Oregon fill-removal law because his 12-acre property near Junction City was a wetland.

The parcel wasn't identified as a wetland on federal, state or county maps, but the Department of State Land nonetheless determined the project required a wetland fill-removal permit due to soil characteristics and other features.

Under state law, the fact that Bounds had received county approval for rebuilding the barn was irrelevant.

The House Agriculture



MateuszPerkowski/Capital Bureau

Jesse Bounds runs a straw-compressing facility in Junction City that state regulators claim was rebuilt on a wetland after a fire.

Committee has now approved a bill that would change Oregon fill-removal law to rectify the situation for Bounds and farmers who find themselves in a similar dilemma.

On April 13, the committee unanimously referred House Bill 2785 for a vote on the House floor with a “do pass” recommendation.

Under HB 2785, fill-re-

moval requirements would not apply when replacing a dwelling or agricultural building on farmland, as long as the structure receives county approval, existed before 2017

and would be located on the same parcel.

The committee's chairman, Brian Clem, D-Salem, said the bill is “just a tiny starting place” for dealing with conflicts that may arise from Oregon's wetland rules.

Wetlands are “treasured in this state” but it's been too long since lawmakers looked at how they're defined and the process for resolving fill-removal disputes, Clem said.

“Sorry to spring this on you, but prepare to deal with wetlands for another year,” he said.

For example, lawmakers should consider the creation of authoritative maps for identifying wetlands and whether fill-removal enforcement should remain complaint-driven, as it is now, Clem said.

Corrections

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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541-278-2678 • tbriggs@eastoregonian.com

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COMMERCIAL PRINTING
Production Manager: Mike Jensen
541-215-0824 • mjensen@eastoregonian.com

AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Breezy with variable clouds	Sun and clouds	Some sun, then clouds	Cloudy	A couple of showers

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

54°	35°	57°	37°	62°	43°	60°	43°	60°	40°
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HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

60°	37°	62°	36°	66°	43°	66°	44°	66°	42°
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ALMANAC

PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	53°	41°
Normals	61°	39°
Records	92° (1904)	21° (1911)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.

0.33"

Month to date 0.52"
Normal month to date 0.55"
Year to date 6.79"
Last year to date 4.08"
Normal year to date 4.51"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	61°	45°
Normals	64°	39°
Records	86° (1947)	21° (1968)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.

0.29"

Month to date 0.34"
Normal month to date 0.32"
Year to date 5.27"
Last year to date 2.84"
Normal year to date 3.43"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:11 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:40 p.m.
Moonrise today	11:10 p.m.
Moonset today	8:22 a.m.

Last	New	First	Full
Apr 19	Apr 26	May 2	May 10

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Variable cloudiness today with a couple of showers; cool across the north.
Eastern and Central Oregon: Brief showers today, except rain and snow showers in central parts and near the Cascades.
Western Washington: Variable clouds today with a brief shower or two.
Eastern Washington: Variable clouds today with a shower; however, a snow shower in the mountains.
Cascades: Periods of snow today, accumulating 1-2 inches; chilly.
Northern California: Partly sunny today; unseasonably cold in the interior mountains.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	51	40	sh	55	39	c
Baker City	46	26	sn	51	30	pc
Bend	46	24	pc	52	29	pc
Brookings	51	39	sh	58	43	c
Burns	43	22	pc	51	31	pc
Enterprise	41	24	sn	46	28	pc
Eugene	53	34	sh	59	34	c
Heppner	50	32	pc	54	32	pc
Hermiston	60	37	c	62	36	pc
John Day	45	27	sn	52	33	pc
Klamath Falls	45	23	pc	56	30	pc
La Grande	47	31	c	53	33	pc
Meacham	45	30	c	51	32	pc
Medford	55	35	sh	63	41	pc
Newport	50	39	sh	54	39	c
North Bend	53	39	sh	58	42	c
Ontario	53	31	sh	58	36	pc
Pasco	60	36	c	62	36	pc
Pendleton	54	35	c	57	37	pc
Redmond	49	24	pc	55	27	pc
Salem	53	35	sh	60	37	c
Spokane	50	33	c	52	33	pc
Ukiah	45	26	sn	51	29	pc
Vancouver	53	39	sh	59	40	c
Walla Walla	55	39	c	58	40	pc
Yakima	60	35	pc	60	36	pc

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	83	51	pc	87	53	s
Hong Kong	81	72	pc	83	74	t
Jerusalem	64	49	pc	63	47	s
London	60	45	pc	56	41	pc
Mexico City	77	53	pc	78	52	pc
Moscow	41	26	c	41	25	pc
Paris	60	45	pc	60	42	c
Rome	68	52	pc	68	51	pc
Seoul	57	50	r	68	51	pc
Sydney	74	60	s	72	60	pc
Tokyo	66	58	pc	69	56	pc

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Saturday
Boardman	WSW 10-20	SW 6-12
Pendleton	W 10-20	WSW 6-12

UV INDEX TODAY

0 2 4 4 3 1

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2017

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary:

Showers and thunderstorms will extend from the Ohio Valley to the Dakotas today. Storms will erupt over the southern High Plains and southern Texas while rain and snow showers diminish in the Northwest.

Yesterday's National Extremes:

(for the 48 contiguous states)
High 93° in Gila Bend, Ariz. Low 12° in Champion, Mich.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sat.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	80	47	s	78	47	s
Atlanta	82	61	s	81	61	pc
Atlanta City	57	46	s	58	54	c
Baltimore	67	49	s	68	58	c
Billings	58	38	pc	53	32	pc
Birmingham	87	63	pc	85	37	pc
Boise	48	31	sh	56	37	pc
Boston	56	42	s	63	50	s
Charleston, SC	81	61	s	81	61	pc
Chicago	68	61	c	78	60	pc
Cleveland	66	54	c	78	65	c
Dallas	82	63	pc	82	65	pc
Denver	77	40	pc	66	39	pc
Detroit	63	50	c	78	60	t
El Paso	88	58	pc	86	57	s
Fairbanks	48	25	s	41	24	s
Fargo	69	45	c	65	38	pc
Honolulu	83	70	pc	85	71	pc
Houston	81	64	pc	83	66	pc
Indianapolis	77	61	c	79	62	pc
Jacksonville	81	60	pc	81	60	pc
Kansas City	74	64	t	77	53	t
Las Vegas	77	57	s	82	62	c
Little Rock	82	59	pc	80	63	pc
Los Angeles	72	53	s	76	53	s
Louisville	85	64	pc	83	65	s
Memphis	86	63	pc	83	65	s
Miami	82	73	pc	82	73	pc
Millwaukee	54	51	c	74	54	c
Minneapolis	65	58	r	67	46	r
Nashville	87	63	pc	84	63	s
New Orleans	81	64	c	80	65	pc
New York City	64	46	s	59	56	c
Oklahoma City	78	61</				